

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF GROUP STUDY AND GROUP EFFORT.  
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1. IN OUR MODERN AQUARIAN AGE THERE IS PERHAPS NO ONE ASPECT MORE OUTSTANDING than the principle and practice of group-activity. National and individual barriers are being rapidly, and sometimes painfully, removed. Class distinctions, economic privileges and all phases of private and exclusive living are being vigorously attacked and dissolved under the stimulus of the cosmic rays of the planet Uranus--which governs the sign Aquarius.
2. The Age of Pisces was the Age of the Individual, the select few, the privileged elite--privileges which in most cases were based upon nothing more tangible than money and social influence. The Age of Aquarius is the Age of the Masses. The Individual today must struggle to maintain his individuality, to sustain his private world, to protect his personal rights.
3. While there are many things which we, as individuals, may not like, we must nevertheless admit that, for the masses of Mankind, the Aquarian impulse of Group-Consciousness and Group-Action has produced startling changes in our daily life and provided striking improvements for the average human family. And all of us, who feel we are individuals, nevertheless stand to benefit by the elevation and improvement of the general masses of men and women.
4. There is no field of individual effort where this is more true than in the study of The Ancient Wisdom. In ages past it was necessary for the would be student to travel vast distances to find a Teacher, spend huge sums of both money and energy to secure a copy of the Sacred Teachings. Often the student wasted years of his life looking in vain for someone to open up the mysteries of Nature and explain her secrets. Today this is all changed. Today, in the Age of Aquarius, the Ancient Knowledge is available to everyone. It is available at a price that is incredible in view of the terrific efforts that students were obliged to make in times past. Who can count the number of books within reach of anyone who chooses to open their covers and read! The number of Teachers, Instructors and Way-showers is legion. Therefore, the student of today may not complain that the Sacred Doors are closed to him, the Divine Wisdom withheld, the Supreme Science unobtainable.
5. However, there is much complaint in the great body of readers who comprise the student groups of today. Their complaint is that there is so much to read, so much to hear, so much to think about they do not know where to begin they do not know what to read, with whom to study. Nor do they know what they may reasonably expect to achieve in their efforts to become a "good student." This is certainly a reasonable complaint, from one standpoint. But inasmuch as there is a vast assortment of books and teachers in every one of the many fields of human activity--this abundance should not, in itself, deter the sensible seeker from striving to lay a sound foundation for his study of the Great Mysteries and their application in his personal life.
6. The Age of Aquarius is the Age of Abundance for the Average Man. And there must be an abundance of all things needful to his wellbeing and happiness. The greatest of these blessings being The Divine Wisdom of The Christ-Way, it is right and fitting that there should be so many books, so many teachers.  
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7. There is a type of mind which can easily and readily accept the wisdom in Group-activity for most of the aspects of human life---except when it comes to the study of Spiritual matters and their development as a part of the human consciousness. These people are willing to accept the various rules and regulations which have been devised and proved for the needs of the mass-man, and to admit the wisdom in such plans. In so-called spiritual matters it is quite a different thing.
  8. This aversion to Groups and Group-Instruction which characterizes so many students of today is largely the result of the disappointments they have received from the various Groups professing to have something to teach. And it is with an entirely sympathetic understanding of their unhappy experiences in Groups that we are preparing these pages for their guidance.
  9. Apart from the several factors of personal gain and financial profit which has prompted the founding of most occult and metaphysical Groups, apart also from the inevitable exploitation of personality and ego which has been the cause of many Groups coming forth from time to time, there is but one basic reason for the constant failure of these Groups to give the inspiration and guidance which the sincere student has almost despaired of ever finding. And that one reason is: the vast majority of these Groups lack Authority.
  10. In the world of Spiritual Law there is but ONE Authority. It is that Authority which is the reward of personal experience, the result of personal effort and the product of ages of observation and experiment. Consequently, there is in existence but One Group which is truly, genuinely and eternally endowed with Authority to teach and direct the spiritual development of Mankind.
  11. The Great White Brotherhood of The Ancient Wisdom-Religion is the ONLY and SINGLE Authority, endowed by the blessings of the ages, to give Group Instruction in the Divine Science of Cosmic Principle and Perfection.
  12. The Instruction, offered without price to every seeking soul, by the Great White Lodge of The Elder Brothers of Humanity is an Instruction which is based upon an infallible system, a fool-proof method of education. It is the result of ages of painstaking effort on the part of the Great Thinkers of all races to share Their knowledge and wisdom with Mankind. Always the Instruction offered by These enlightened Brothers of The Christ, always is this Knowledge presented according to a scientific and extremely exact system of Group-study, Group-Participation, Group-effort. And the reasons for this insistence upon Group-education are not difficult to understand.
  13. In every field of human endeavor excellence is achieved only by following the age-old highway of personal effort beginning with the many and ending with the one, from the collective to the individual excellence. The recognition of this principle of growth has led many students to associate themselves with various Groups which have claimed to possess authentic connections with The Ancient School of Cosmic Law which has produced every truly great Teacher and Wayshower. The failure, sooner or later, of such Groups to lead their students from the general excellence of the many to the specific superiority of the genuine Individual has often discouraged the student beyond the point of making any further effort to reach the heights of the Law.
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14. Today, with all the world held in the grip of war-fear, The Great White Brotherhood is much closer to the bewildered peoples of Earth than ever. The benevolent Power and Protection of the Great Souls Who compose this secret fraternity of the Christ is greater and more available in times of universal tribulation than in those years when Humanity is expressing more fully the genuine spirit of Christian Brotherhood and national peace.
15. Yet the very name of The Great White Brotherhood, and its many different titles (The White Lodge, Brotherhood of the Christs, etc.) have been wantonly abused, violated and slandered by the various mercenary groups, the unscrupulous individuals who have taken advantage of the ignorance of the public concerning this Divine Assembly Which controls the destiny of all nations.
16. To the true Student of the Divine Mysteries, to the genuine Teacher of the occult or hidden Laws of God, to one who truly knows the Masters (and thus deeply loves Them) the Great White Brotherhood is the most sacred and exalted fraternity of illumined minds on our planet. To this student, to this kind of teacher, The Great White Lodge is the very sanctuary of the Christ Spirit, and it is impossible for them to speak of It in any save reverent terms. It is impossible for such a student or teacher to gossip glibly about their membership in this truly divine fraternity. It is unthinkable for one who truly knows and understands the Masters, Their Great Brotherhood, Their White Lodge, to advertise in public papers and claim that they are an authorized and approved branch of this exalted Society of the Elder Brothers.
17. There are numberless cults claiming to be the direct and only legitimate branch of this Brotherhood to be found in the outer world. There are several correspondence-schools which brazenly call themselves the "Great White Brotherhood", and dozens of "Colleges of the Mysteries" which claim to be a direct mouthpiece of the Masters, with special powers and gifts from The Lodge.
18. Without a single exception, all of these organizations are utterly fraudulent. The thousands of victimized students who have subscribed to the courses of these dishonest schemes is daily being added to my more victims. The wise student is immediately suspicious of the organization or individual making great claims for its expensive courses of self-development, presenting its teachers as men with extraordinary powers and miraculous knowledge---all of which can be the instantaneous possession of the prospective student if he will but send in the required money. Let the buyer beware.
19. A student becomes a Member of the Great White Lodge of this Divine Brotherhood only after years of faithful, patient and loyal devotion to the highest standard of conduct. No college or school of the outer world approaches the intense program of preparation, instruction and examination which is required of every Probationer or Novice who wishes to, someday, become an honored Member of The Great White Brotherhood of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion.
20. No one has ever become a Member of the Great White Brotherhood through the purchase of courses or lessons, or buying membership in any way whatsoever. Every one who IS a Member has earned his admission through service to Mankind and assistance to Humanity---only. No genuine Member of the White Lodge will allow his name to be attached to any commercial system of public instruction which advertises in public reading-matter or periodicals.

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21. THE GREAT WHITE LODGE AND ITS BROTHERHOOD OF THE CHRISTED LIGHT INVARIABLY works through the instrumentality of Groups. These Groups are arranged much in the same manner used by the great governmental agencies of all nations. There is at the top, one Supreme Head, similar to the king or president of a nation. Immediately below this Head is a small number of assistants, three or four, who serve in the same way the cabinet serves the president of the U.S. As the delegated authority is spread over a larger and larger group of workers the authority itself becomes diluted, as it were, and subject to many other influences. However, unlike the various national agencies which have much power in their own right, the Supreme Director of The Great White Lodge may at any time send forth directives which change the rulings or decisions of the many lower groups of the Lodge. Thus while the president of the U.S. had much authority, that authority is subject to the restrictions imposed upon it by our Congress. Such is not the case with the Great Lord of Light Who stands as the Supreme Head of the Ancient Fraternity of the White Lodge. His Word, His Authority and His Power are of so great a perfection that mistakes are never possible to Him. He is, indeed, the Supreme Manifestation of The Father in Heaven.
22. Every seeker who hopes to someday manifest the Great Christ Consciousness more abundantly in his life and world, every student, great or small, in the eyes of the world, is immediately and constantly under the blessing and protection of the many departments of The Great White Lodge. And he is also under the Ray of Love Which shines forever from the Supreme Heart of The Great Cosmic Head of the White Brotherhood. However, This Cosmic Lord lives in a world of such great Spiritual Consciousness, moves in a plane of such gigantic Cosmic dimensions, it would be foolish for the average human student to imagine that he, personally, is in touch with The Lord of Light—except through the instrumentality of his own Christed-Self.
23. Only The Great White Lodge has the Divine Authority to establish Groups and to provide the students in these Groups with the Highest Philosophy of the Wisdom-Religion. And the Groups are devised in the same way our modern educational institutions are founded. There are the many students in the lower, or grade school, phases of The Wisdom. There are the high-school circles in which the Student finds a greater amount and quality of the Wisdom offered for his use. There are the college classes to which he will eventually be promoted as he masters the knowledge of the lower grades. Above these college circles of study will be found the much smaller Groups made up largely of teachers of the lower grades. This division continues until there will be classes containing but five or six students, so profound has the Wisdom become, and so demanding in its requirements.
24. The Student must expect his efforts in a Group of The Great Lodge to extend over many lifetimes. And unlike the grades of the outer educational circles the Student of the Divine Laws frequently returns to a lower grade in order to more perfectly master some point of The Cosmic Law which he is seeking to understand in a special way—in order that he may give some special and unusual service to Humanity. In some cases the Student is not even aware that he IS a Student. His outer life may have no connection with any society, religion, church or occult group. Nevertheless, he may have a vital part to play in the international program of The Great University of Light which is constantly prompting him to take up various projects which give him the necessary schooling and prepare him, silently, secretly, gently, for a more conscious and public association with The Ancient Fraternity of the Elder Brothers.
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25. THE IDEA OF THE GROUP IS A PARAMOUNT PRINCIPLE IN ALL EVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES. Every aspect of life, every phase of nature is built upon this cosmic process. There is the great central point of light, The Divine Atom, and around this One move the several different degrees of Light-substance, the protons, neutrons, electrons, etc. The atoms, more vivid in their light and more divine, form the molecules. These in turn lower The Light into larger and grosser forms, and eventually form the cells through which the Light passes even more slowly and is spread over a much greater area. At last the organ is formed of a great collection of the cells, and the human body comes forth.
26. Every kingdom of Life is clearly seen as the result of group activity and group service. The amazing intelligence of the colonies of ants and bees, which consider only the security and perpetuation of the Group is the intelligence of God manifesting as brilliantly as He does through a colony of human beings. The nations of Earth are built upon this ancient and eternal idea of The Group. It is a matter of historical fact that the more primitive and less evolved nations are those with the most human beings. And as the Supreme Consciousness of The Christ is realized in greater and greater measure we find the number of people growing less and less in those nations which manifest the greatest perfection of The Divine Idea.
27. The Great Law of Evolution is that: The Greater the Awareness of The Divine Self the human consciousness, the mortal soul reaches, the less will that soul participate in Group evolution and group service. Consequently in the lower races of Mankind we find many millions, and these millions have but a dim, vague comprehension of their own nature and character. The moment a soul in these lower Groups begins to become aware of itself, there is a step forward toward a better and more exclusive position in the tribe or race. In this way the leaders the rulers, the kings and queens have come forth from the ranks and risen to the position of power and eminence. For this is the reward of Nature, the gift of The Holy Spirit for being able to grasp a more detailed program of life and human action.
28. All the great thinkers, the creators, the inventors, the leaders in all phases of our human life have reached their high estate through a long and persistent effort to increase their awareness of their individual nature, their divine soul. And even after the Thinker has freed himself from the mass-consciousness of the Group, and has lifted himself above the karmic destiny of the masses, he is still obliged to recognize the Group and work through it. But the Group now offers the Thinker, the advanced Souls of the human kingdom, a much more profound opportunity for individual expression. He serves the Group not so much by being a part of it, but by serving the Great Lodge of Wisdom as a special channel through which the Elder Brothers can project Their next steps for the elevation of the mass groups.
29. All evolutionary programs are devised for one single purpose, created for one particular result. That result, that purpose is to compel the separate soul to realize his oneness with the Universal Soul—and then to become a CONSCIOUS part of the Great Soul. In short to become as Sir Francis, a Self-Conscious Personality aware of Himself not as a member of The Group, but as a Channel for the Group, for its greater perfection, for its eventual fulfillment in the Light.
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30. AN INTERESTING ASPECT OF EVERY GREAT COSMIC PRINCIPLE IS THE REFLEX ACTION, the sub-action or the apparent paradoxical reaction that accompanies it. In this principle of Group Development we find an extraordinary Re-action which at first observation seems to invalidate the Basic Law itself. However, this is not true. This Re-action is but one more proof of the Supreme Wisdom of the Divine Mind Which is holding all things in Itself. Every Force in nature has its opposite or reverse principle. In the Cosmic Urge toward Group Action in which the wellbeing of the Many is the primary concern, there is also the reverse of this Action or the Law of the One, the Individual.
31. In every national history there are accounts of a single human soul rising up against the existing power of the king or ruler. This soul has attempted to change the status quo, either for better or for worse, but to change the existing state of affairs within his nation. Revolutions, rebellions, great catastrophes are always the result of the conflict of the One against the Many, the single patriot against the despotic rule of the many. A little thought upon this point will reveal many interesting aspects of our human development.
32. In our human body we find the same Law of Resistance of the One against the Many. This can be either beneficial or disastrous. When one cell within an organ decides to depart from the basic pattern of the many---there is pain, sickness and discomfort. If carried to sufficient length this single rebellious cell can bring about the death of the entire body. The process may be reversed and produce health and harmony. For in the case of a diseased organ it is only necessary for a single cell to be charged with sufficient strength and purity to begin its great recuperating action and, eventually, bring back the original idea of health and wellbeing in the body organs.  
(There are tremendous indications in this paragraph for the alert seeker to discover and put into operation in his own body and world of affairs.)
33. Thus a study of these two aspects of the Great Principle of Group action reveals many interesting factors. At first the soul is impelled to surrender itself to the destiny of the composite group, the complete family of souls. It is carried along with millions of others in order to give it the necessary foundation of normal development and evolution as part of a great whole. Then, little by little, it is prodded to think for itself, to oppose the mass action and to seek a more personalized life for its own. And in this departure from the status quo, the average condition, it becomes conscious of the world in a broader sense, and the world, in turn, becomes conscious of this restless soul. And so begins the destiny of one more leader, thinker, inventor, way-shower.
34. In the millions of students who make up the membership of the various groups of "Truth-students" this same principle of Action and Re-action exists. And those students who make an especial effort to rise out of the level of the average congregation, the usual student-body, these are the Souls who attract the attention of The Elder Brothers of the Great White Lodge. To these vigorous Souls who are attempting to throw off the yoke of mediocrity and the commonplace will come a special Call from on High. It is the Voice of The Masters sending encouragement and added strength to encourage these ambitious seekers to continue on in their attempt to rise higher and higher on the Divine Ladder of Light. It is said: "A word to the wise, is sufficient." May that be so with you.  
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